

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-11

ACDA-05 SAM-01 /076 W

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R 021859Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7455

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 0001

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 03225

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EEC, GW, FR

SUBJECT: FRANCO-GERMAN SUMMIT

REF: (A) 75 PARIS 33320, (B) 73 PARIS 22562

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: FRANCO-GERMAN SUMMIT WILL TAKE PLACE IN FRANCE FEBRUARY 12-13. FRENCH EXPECT MEETING WILL CONTINUE WHAT THEY SEE AS GROWING AND "NATURAL" CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GISCARD, SCHMIDT AND THEIR RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. GISCARD WILL HOST FRG CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT FOR SEMI-ANNUAL FRANCO-GERMAN SUMMIT FEBRUARY 12-13 IN SMALL HIDEAWAY CLOSE TO NICE. THIS SUMMIT, LIKE ITS PREDECESSORS, WILL BE HELD WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE FRANCO-GERMAN 1963 TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION. PLAISANT (QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR CENTRAL EUROPE) TOLD US JANUARY 30 THAT GISCARD AND SCHMIDT WOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY LARGE NUMBER OF THEIR KEY MINISTERS, INCLUDING FONMINS, FINANCE MINISTERS, MINISTERS OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, AND -- ON THE FRENCH SIDE -- GISCARD'S TWO MINISTERS OF STATE: INTERIOR MINISTER PONIATOWSKI AND JUSTICE MINISTER LECANUET. DEFENSE MINISTERS, HOWEVER, CONFIDENTIAL

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ARE NOT EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE. PLAISANT SAID THERE

IS NO FORMAL AGENDA FOR THESE MEETINGS YET, AND THERE MAY BE NONE BECAUSE BOTH GISCARD AND SCHMIDT PREFER INFORMAL, UNSTRUCTURED AND WIDE-RANGING TALKS.

3. AMONG THE SUBJECTS LIKELY TO BE DISCUSSED, PLAISANT EXPECTS THAT THE TINDEMANS REPORT AND DIRECT ELECTION OF THE EC PARLIAMENT WILL RECEIVE SPECIAL ATTENTION. PLAISANT RECALLED THAT THERE STILL REMAINS A FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FRENCH APPROACH TO APPORTIONING NATIONAL REPRESENTATION WITHIN THE EC PARLIAMENT (FRENCH PREFER PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION) AND GERMAN APPROACH (FRG PREFERS WEIGHTED NATIONAL REPRESENTATION THAT WOULD BE SKEWED SOMEWHAT TO FAVOR SMALLER COUNTRIES. REF A REPORTS IN MORE DETAIL EARLIER EXCHANGE BETWEEN SAUVAGNARGUES AND GENSCHER ON THIS SUBJECT).

4. PLAISANT DOES NOT BELIEVE SCHMIDT WILL PUSH HEAVILY ON BERLIN ISSUES DURING SUMMIT. IN THE PAST, SAID PLAISANT, FRENCH HAVE SOUGHT TO SEPARATE BILATERAL FRANCO-GERMAN ISSUES (WHICH THEY SEE AS LEGITIMATE GRIST FOR SUMMIT MILL) FROM MORE COMPLICATED QUADRIPARTITE ISSUES (WHICH FRENCH VIEW IN LARGER CONTEXT THAN FRANCO-GERMAN SUMMIT). FRENCH INTEND TO MAINTAIN SAME DISTINCTION DURING FEBRUARY SUMMIT.

5. PLAISANT COMMENTED THAT BILATERAL EXCHANGES AT ALL LEVELS BETWEEN BONN AND PARIS ARE BECOMING ROUTINE "EVERYDAY THING." THIS HAS LED TO GENERAL PERCEPTION THAT FRENCH PRESIDENT AND MINISTERS DO NOT REQUIRE LARGE STAFFS TO SUPPORT FRANCO-GERMAN SUMMIT. MOREOVER, GISCARD'S APPROACH TO PRESIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT TENDS TO

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-11

ACDA-05 SAM-01 /076 W

----- 013375

R 021859Z FEB 76
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 03225

EXCLUDE MIDDLE LEVEL EXPERTS IN EFFORT TO KEEP MEETINGS
AS SMALL AND INFORMAL AS POSSIBLE. PLAISANT HIMSELF
DOES NOT EXPECT TO ATTEND SUMMIT.

6. COMMENT: CLOSE AND NATURAL WORKING HABITS HAVE
GROWN UP BETWEEN FRENCH AND GERMAN BUREAUCRACIES OVER
THE PAST FEW YEARS. THIS, COMBINED WITH THE AURA OF
MUTUAL TRUST AND RESPECT THAT GISCARD AND SCHMIDT DIS-
PLAY IN THEIR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP, HAS PRODUCED SENSE
OF SATISFACTION IN PARIS WITH REGARD TO FRANCO-GERMAN
RELATIONS. THE RESIDUAL FRENCH NERVOUSNESS OVER THE
FUTURE OF GERMANY AND BERLIN REMAINS. ITS OUTWARD
MANIFESTATIONS, HOWEVER, WHICH WERE SO VIRULENT IN 1973
(SEE REF B, FOR EXAMPLE) HAVE DISSIPATED SINCE THEN.
IN PART THIS IS DUE TO A GENERAL COINCIDENCE OF INTER-
ESTS THAT SEEMS TO EXIST BETWEEN GISCARD AND SCHMIDT ON
MOST KEY ISSUES. BEYOND THAT, HOWEVER, THE INTIMATE
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GISCARD AND SCHMIDT HAS SERVED TO
DEFUSE OTHER POTENTIAL ISSUES. WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION
THAT EITHER GISCARD OR SCHMIDT -- OR AT TIMES THE TWO
OF THEM TOGETHER-- CONSCIOUSLY WORK TO INSURE THAT
FRANCO-GERMAN INTERESTS STAY IN HARMONY AND OFF COLLI-
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SION PATHS, AN ATTITUDE WHICH SERVES LARGER U.S. INTER-
ESTS IN EUROPE AS WELL.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SUMMIT MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PARIS03225
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760039-0185
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760291/aaaadcgy.tel
Line Count: 157
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 PARIS 33320, 76 PARIS 22562
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 APR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <11 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRANCO-GERMAN SUMMIT
TAGS: PFOR, GE, FR, EEC, (SCHMIDT, HELMUT), (GISCARD DESTAING, VALERY)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006